

engage in those services upon which depend their growth and development.

Paul, with a keen sense of its necessity gives us—Christians—the admonition “not to neglect the assembling of themselves together.” But the assembling is for the purpose of sharing the benefits to be derived from association. And while I would not recommend the observance of the communion service at every “assembling of themselves together,” I would earnestly admonish and kindly warn against that practice which weakens our desire to engage in it, for it is a fact familiar to all that to neglect a duty or a privilege is only to be followed by omitting it alas! altogether. This is true of prayer, perusing the Bible, secret devotion, attending the public services or anything connected with Christian duty we might name. The conclusion again forces itself upon us that while we have no direct scriptural answer to the query—no special number of these (communion) services per year or in any given time, I would advise the observance of them with such frequency as will keep up a lively interest in this as well as in every other Christian service, and so promote the highest interest in the life that now is and also that which is to come. But upon this point (frequency) every Christian congregation ought to be the sufficient and competent judge.

A few thoughts upon John 6: 53-57 will conclude this essay. John in 13th chapter it would seem drops the narrative of the communion service without completing it, naming only the washing of one and others' feet and the Lord's supper. But he is followed closely by two important testimonies, Matt. 26: 26-28 and Mark 14: 22-24. Here Christ gives Christians the blessed *emblems representing* his flesh and his blood. And were it not for this instruction and guidance in the matter of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, we might today be as profoundly ignorant of the answer to the question that perplexed the Jews, namely, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”

Paul, by the power of inspiration, brings the matter seemingly still somewhat clearer to view. Hear him. “The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ? The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?” Not putting this statement in the interrogative form is the strongest way of declaring it. But if there be in the minds of any still difficulty to comprehend the passage we are considering they are kindly referred to that good old patriarch, Abraham, who at the command of God “went forward not knowing whither he went.” Heb. 11: 8.

Commanded to leave the scenes of his childhood and all that was dear to him, save his family and a nephew, he went out to a country of which he knew practically nothing. One might ask, how could he go under such perplexing circumstances? The answer is not far to seek. He went under the mighty influence of the great power of his faith in God. When the dear boy, the joy and staff of his declining years was required he went out not knowing whither he went but *he went and calmly* and trustingly. He said, “The Lord will provide.” And what was the reward of such trust? Very great indeed. Great beyond all human power to estimate. First:—“He was called the friend of God.” O blessed friendship. Friendship of inestimable value. For, “If God be for us who can be against us?” But is this all? Nay, verily. Down the track of the ages rings the greatest, the grantest eulogy ever spoken for man. “And it—his confiding trust.—“Was accounted unto him for righteousness.” Christians do you wish for more? Can you ask for a reward greater than this? Be content. Go trustingly forward knowing assuredly that the Father is ever ready and willing that you should hold his hand, and although gloomy doubts should arise and your spiritual vision be bedimmed with fear, go calmly forward and the Sun of righteousness will yet shine for you and you shall return to your promised inheritance with shouts and everlasting joy upon your head. Now if there is one single soul led to a better understanding of the subject we have been considering I am well repaid and to God be all the praise.

THE GREATEST NEED OF THE BRETHREN CHURCH.

R. R. TEETER.

What do I consider the greatest need of the Brethren church?

Among its multifarious needs is there a greatest?

We hear calls for ministers, calls for college support, calls for mission funds, both state and national, calls for literature that is strictly Brethren, and many more appeals of like nature.

Are all these needs? Yes, certainly, but which is greatest? Which will do the church the most real good? Not material earthly good, but eternal good.

Is what the Brethren church most needs included in the above? No. Give the church what it really needs most, and all these minor wants will be supplied.

Then what is that which will produce such wonderful results? It is *consecration*.

The greatest need of the Brethren church is consecration.

Do I say there is no consecration in the Brethren church? No. But I do say there is not enough, therefore it needs more. Not only does it need a consecrated ministry, but a consecrated laity as well. A thoroughly consecrated ministry can accomplish wonders, but a thoroughly consecrated laity working in harmony with the ministry will accomplish greater wonders.

How can consecration produce such favorable results?

It will give every member a clearer understanding of the requirements of a Christian. While sins of commission are obnoxious to every Christian, I fear sins of omission are generally regarded in an apathetic manner.

Consecration will hold such sins out so prominently that they too will become obnoxious, and the Christian will be urged to duty.

Consecration does not mean simply heart service, but the laying of everything before the Lord for his use. The heart, will, intellect, body, time and means,—our all belongs to him.

If the church were more consecrated, its ministers could devote more time to its work, being better supported, and relieved from giving thought to the things of this world.

If the church were more consecrated the home mission work would not be so hampered for want of means, and many new churches might be organized.

If the church were more consecrated, our much loved, much abused college would not be in such a precarious state.

Why do I think so? Because consecration reaches even through the many folds of the leather-bound, strapped-down, buckled up pocket-book, and makes liberal the heart of its owner, and delights his soul with fatness.

Yes, the greatest need of the Brethren church is consecration. The Y. P. S. C. E. realizing the need of consecration, holds its monthly consecration meetings, thus constantly bringing to remembrance the vows to God.

God requires consecration. From the Hebrew children he required consecration of vessels (Joshua 6: 9,) of profits (Mic. 4: 13,) of cattle (2 Chron. 20: 33,) of fields (Lev. 27: 28,) of nations (Ex. 19: 6,) (and of individuals (Num. 6: 9-13.)

Then I repeat the greatest need of the Brethren church is consecration.

Let us consecrate, *consecrate*, CONSECRATE.

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